



THE CHILDREN'S CRUSADE



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AVENGERS

THE CHILDREN'S CRUSADE

ARTHUR
ADAMS
1-8-10
2010

And there came a day, a day unlike any other, when Earth's Mightiest Heroes found themselves united against a common threat! On that day, the Avengers were born, to fight the foes no single super hero could withstand!

AVENGERS

THE CHILDREN'S CRUSADE



United by friendship and bravery, Patriot, Hawkeye, Wiccan, Hulkling, Stature, Speed, and the Vision are the Young Avengers, following in the footsteps of Earth's Mightiest Heroes!

When Wiccan loses control of his powers, the Avengers fear he has the potential to become another Scarlet Witch: the missing former Avenger who killed three of her teammates and committed what some consider a mutant genocide.

Believing the Scarlet Witch might be the key to Wiccan's future and his freedom, the Young Avengers make an uneasy alliance with the Scarlet Witch's father, the mutant terrorist Magneto. Pursued by the Avengers, Wiccan transports the Young Avengers and Magneto to Wundagore, where the Scarlet Witch was raised.

Traveling in disguise, the motley group is accosted by Quicksilver, Magneto's son and the Scarlet Witch's brother, who is also looking for his sister but wants nothing to do with his father. When, in a fit of fury, Quicksilver attempts to assassinate his father, he strikes, and accidentally injures a woman who appears to be his sister, Wanda. When she is revealed to be a Doombot, the group suspects that Wanda is a guest, or captive, of none other than Doctor Doom.

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AVENGERS: THE CHILDREN'S CRUSADE No. 3, January 2011. Published Monthly by MARVEL WORLDWIDE, INC., a subsidiary of MARVEL ENTERTAINMENT, LLC. OFFICE OF PUBLICATION: 417 5th Avenue, New York, NY 10016. © 2010 Marvel Characters, Inc. All rights reserved. All characters featured in this issue and the distinctive names and likenesses thereof, and all related indicia are trademarks of Marvel Characters, Inc. No similarity between any of the names, characters, persons, and/or institutions in this magazine with those of any living or dead person or institution is intended, and any such similarity which may exist is purely coincidental. \$3.99 per copy in the U.S. (GST #R127032852) in the direct market; Canadian Agreement #40668537. Printed in the USA. ALAN FINE, EVP - Office Of The President, Marvel Worldwide, Inc. and EVP & CMO Marvel Characters B.V.; DAN BUCKLEY, Chief Executive Officer and Publisher - Print, Animation & Digital Media; JIM SOKOLOWSKI, Chief Operating Officer; DAVID GABRIEL, SVP of Publishing Sales & Circulation; DAVID BOGART, SVP of Business Affairs & Talent Management; MICHAEL PASCIULLO, VP of Merchandising & Communications; JIM O'KEEFE, VP of Operations & Logistics; DAN CARR, Executive Director of Publishing Technology; JUSTIN F. GABRIEL, Director of Publishing & Editorial Operations; SUSAN CRESPI, Editorial Operations Manager; ALEX MORALES, Publishing Operations Manager; STAN LEE, Chairman Emeritus. For information regarding advertising in Marvel Comics or on Marvel.com, please contact Ron Stern, VP of Business Development, at rstern@marvel.com. For Marvel subscription inquiries, please call 800-217-9158. Manufactured between 10/20/2010 and 10/29/2010 by QUAD/GRAPHICS, LEBANON, OH, USA.

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THE INN AT MOUNT WUNDAGORE, TRANSIA.

"THE SCARLET WITCH IS A DOOMBOT...?"



WE DON'T KNOW THAT.

WE KNOW SHE'S A ROBOT WHO LOOKS EXACTLY LIKE A DOOMBOT.

MY POINT, 'NEPHEW'...

...IS THAT THIS MACHINE COULD EASILY HAVE BEEN PLANTED HERE BY SOMEONE WHO WANTS US TO *THINK* IT'S A DOOMBOT.

SOMEONE LIKE *ME*, PERHAPS?

YOU AND DOOM *HAVE* BEEN RIVALS FOR DECADES, FATHER.

AND WHAT BETTER WAY TO MOTIVATE AN INVASION OF LATVERIA THAN BY CONVINCING WANDA'S CHILDREN THAT HE'S HOLDING HER CAPTIVE THERE?

JUDGE FOR YOURSELF, PIETRO.

WHO BUT DOOM HAS THE TECHNOLOGY TO CREATE SUCH A DEVICE?

AND WHO BUT DOOM HAS THE POWER TO MAKE IT SEEM AS IF WANDA SIMPLY *DISAPPEARED*--LEAVING NO TRACE OF HER OR HER MAGICKS?

DOOM'S TECH CAN DO THAT?

NO...

"...BUT HIS
SORCERY CAN.

"LIKE YOU AND THOMAS,
VICTOR VON DOOM LOST HIS
MOTHER AT AN EARLY AGE.

"LIKE YOUR MOTHER,
CYNTHIA VON DOOM PRACTICED
WITCHCRAFT TO FIGHT FOR THE
LIVES AND THE RIGHTS OF OTHERS.

"BUT IN THE END, SHE
LOST THE FIGHT, HER LIFE,
AND HER ETERNAL SOUL.

"ALREADY A GIFTED SCIENTIST,
VICTOR TURNED HIS ATTENTION
TO THE MYSTIC ARTS TO RECLAIM
HIS MOTHER'S SOUL...

"...UNTIL HIS EFFORTS
TO COMBINE SCIENCE
AND MAGIC BACKFIRED...

"...BURNING HIM IN THE
SAME FIRES THAT
CONSUMED HIS MOTHER...

"...AND DAMNING HIM
TO LIVE THE REST
OF HIS LIFE AS...

DR. DOOM

"THE SELF-PROCLAIMED
KING OF LATVERIA...

"...THE MASTER OF
SCIENCE AND MAGIC...

"...AND THE
MOST POWERFUL
MAN ALIVE."

"APART FROM
YOU, FATHER."





THE ONLY PERSON MORE POWERFUL THAN DOOM IS YOUR *SISTER*, PIETRO.

WANDA POSSESSES THE UNIQUE ABILITY TO TRANSFORM REALITY TO SUIT HER WHIM.

SO, WHOEVER CONTROLS WANDA CONTROLS THE VERY FABRIC OF EXISTENCE...

...AS YOU WELL KNOW, MY SON.

SO, IF DOOM HAS WANDA--

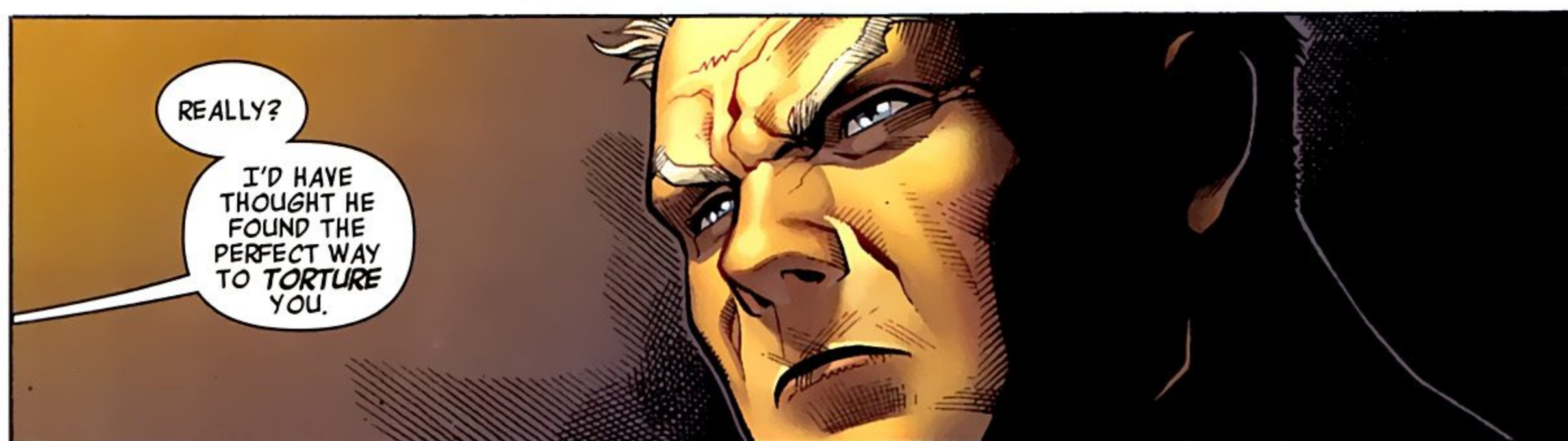
IF DOOM HAS WANDA, WE WOULD *KNOW* BY NOW.

WE'D ALL BE SCURRYING AROUND LIKE DOOMBOTS, DOING HIS INFERNAL BIDDING.



HOW DO YOU KNOW WE'RE *NOT*?

BECAUSE I ASSUME DOOM WOULD HAVE BETTER THINGS FOR ME TO DO THAN STAND AROUND ARGUING WITH MY FATHER.



REALLY?

I'D HAVE THOUGHT HE FOUND THE PERFECT WAY TO *TORTURE* YOU.



SO WHAT IS IT YOU SUGGEST WE *DO*? DECLARE WAR ON DOOM? STORM THE CASTLE?



I SHOULD THINK--BETWEEN THE NINE OF US--WE WOULD MAKE A RATHER FORMIDABLE SEARCH AND RESCUE TEAM.

THAT'S YOUR PLAN?



TO LEAD A GROUP OF *CHILDREN* INTO WHAT IS ALMOST CERTAINLY A DEATH TRAP?

HONESTLY, FATHER, IN ALL THESE YEARS, YOU HAVEN'T CHANGED A *BIT*, HAVE YOU? IT WOULD ALMOST BE *TOUCHING*, IF IT WEREN'T SO *DEMONIC*.

WE MAY BE *CHILDREN*, GENTLEMEN...



...BUT EVEN *WE'RE* NOT STUPID ENOUGH TO RISK STARTING ANOTHER WORLD WAR BY ENGAGING DOOM.

I AM.

WICCAN IS.



NO, I
MEAN,
I'LL
GO.

I'M WITH
TOMMY ON
THIS ONE.

THAT'S
BECAUSE
YOU'RE NOT
GOING.

BUT WHY RISK
SENDING **EVERYBODY**
WHEN I CAN MAGIC MY
WAY IN, GET THE LAY
OF THE LAND, AND GET
OUT? DOOM WILL
NEVER EVEN KNOW
I WAS THERE.



I APPRECIATE
THE OFFER, WILLIAM,
BUT IF WE GO, WE
GO **TOGETHER**.

AND WHO
EXACTLY WILL
BE **LEADING** THIS
EXPEDITION,
MAGNETO?

YOU
MAY LEAD,
IF YOU LIKE,
PATRIOT.

THOUGH I
IMAGINE **HAWKEYE**
MIGHT HAVE
SOMETHING TO SAY
ABOUT THAT.

THAT IS, IF
SHE WERE STILL
SPEAKING
TO YOU.

I WASN'T
SUGGESTING
THAT I--

QUITE RIGHT.
IF WE'RE UP AGAINST
DOOM, WE'LL NEED
OUR MOST POWERFUL
AND EXPERIENCED
SOLDIER TAKING
POINT.

THAT
WOULD BE
YOU, BUT--

THANK
YOU--

NOT
SO FAST,
FATHER.



WHILE YOU'RE
OBVIOUSLY THE
MOST **EXPERIENCED**
PLAYER ON THE FIELD,
YOU'RE NO LONGER
THE MOST
POWERFUL.

OR DID YOU
NOT SEE THE
NEWS FOOTAGE OF
YOUR GRANDSON
MAGICING ALL OF
MIDTOWN MANHATTAN
INTO A COMA
WITH A WAVE OF
HIS HANDS?



THAT
WAS AN
ACCIDENT.

I
KNOW.



IMAGINE THE
KIND OF DAMAGE
YOU COULD DO IF YOU
REALLY **APPLIED**
YOURSELF.

PERHAPS EVEN
ENOUGH TO FRIGHTEN
MY FATHER INTO BEHAVING
HONORABLY FOR ONCE
IN HIS LIFE...

...RATHER THAN
BETRAYING US THE
MOMENT HE GETS
WHAT HE WANTS.



MY ONLY
DESIRE IS TO
SECURE THE SAFETY
AND WELL-BEING OF
MY DAUGHTER,
PIETRO.



I'VE HEARD
IT ALL **BEFORE**,
FATHER.

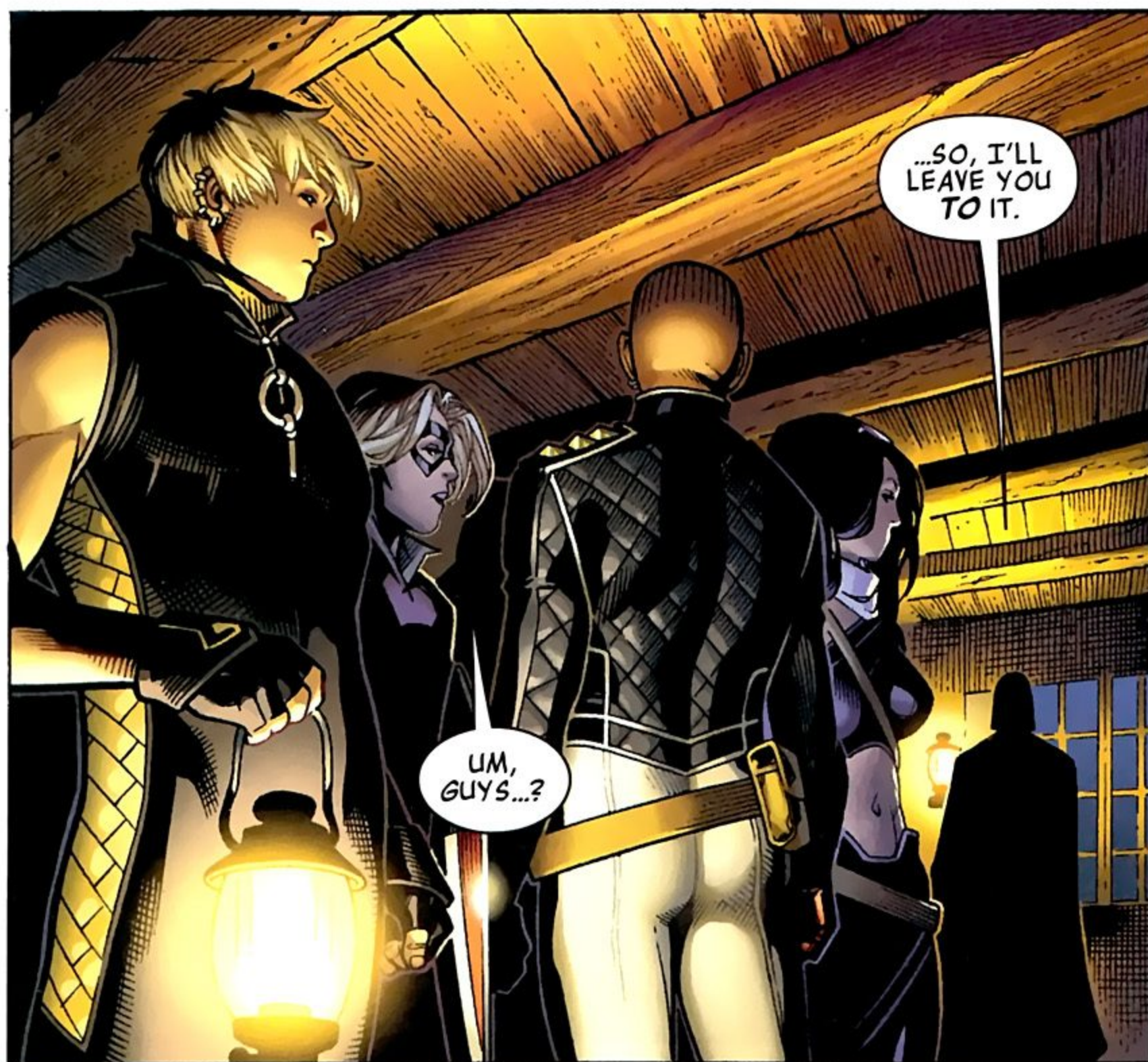
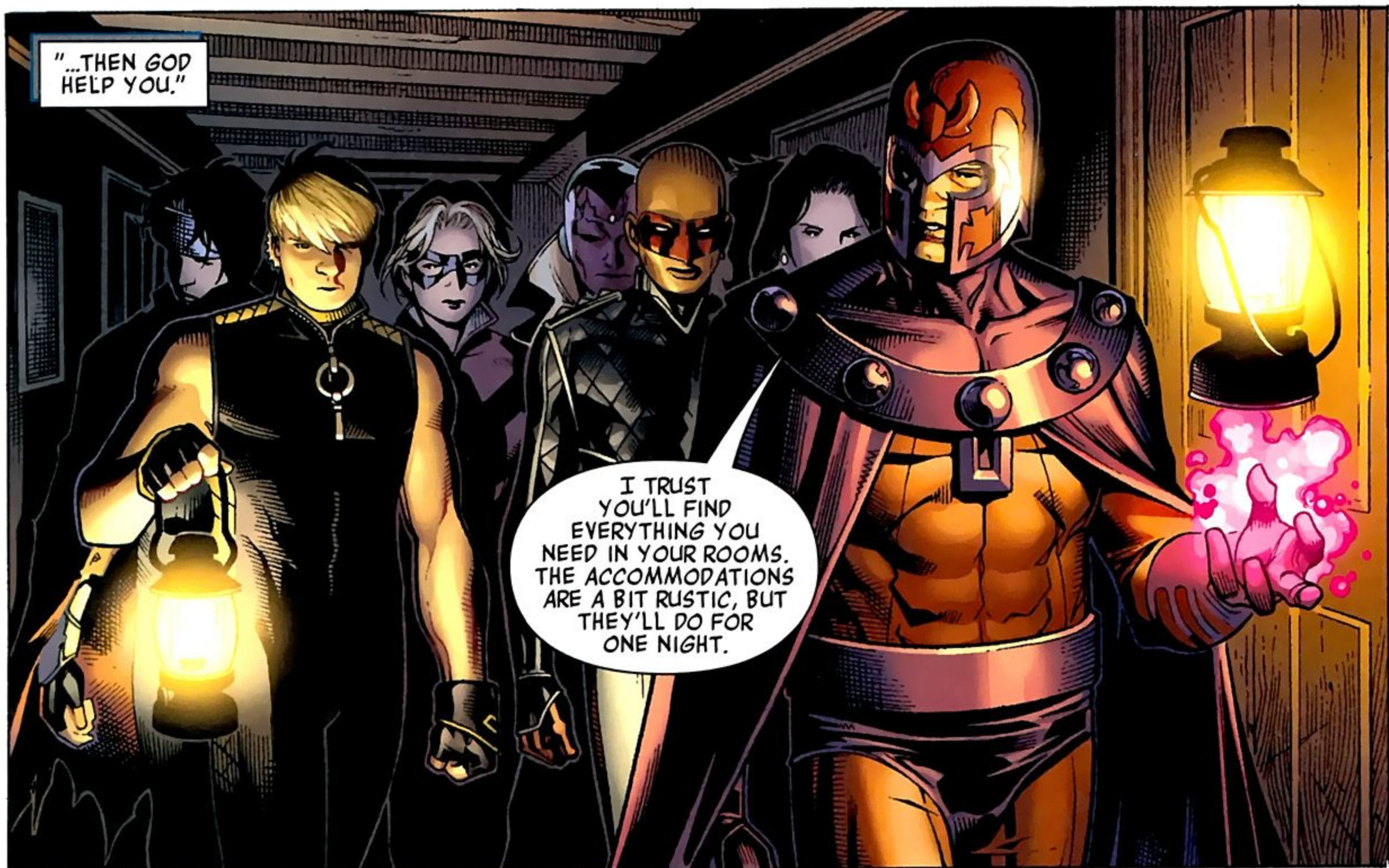
THIS
TIME I HOPE
IT'S **TRUE**.

FOR
YOUR
SAKE.



BECAUSE
OTHERWISE,
YOU'LL HAVE
TO DEAL WITH
WICCAN.

AND IF HE'S
ANYTHING LIKE
HIS **MOTHER**...





...I WANT TO
GO TO LATVERIA,
I WANT TO GO TO
LATVERIA...

MIND
IF I JOIN
YOU?

AFTER ALL,
IF YOU'VE NEVER
BEEN TO LATVERIA,
YOU'LL NEED
SOMEONE TO SHOW
YOU AROUND...

...AND, OF
COURSE, SOMEONE
TO KEEP YOU FROM
BEING TORTURED
AND EVENTUALLY
MURDERED.

I WASN'T--
I WAS JUST--

IF YOU INTEND
TO **LIE** ABOUT IT,
MAY I SUGGEST THAT
IN THE FUTURE YOU
NOT ANNOUNCE YOUR
INTENTIONS EVERY
TIME YOU CAST A
SPELL.

YOU'LL FIND
YOUR ENEMIES ARE
EASIER TO DEFEAT IF
YOU **HAVEN'T** JUST
TOLD THEM WHAT
YOU'RE ABOUT TO
DO TO THEM.

THE ELEMENT
OF SURPRISE AND
ALL THAT.

I HAVE TO
ADMIT, I THOUGHT
I'D HAVE MORE IN
COMMON WITH YOUR
BROTHER, THE
SPEEDSTER...



...BUT HERE YOU ARE,
DISOBEYING MY FATHER
THE MOMENT HE TURNS
HIS BACK.

I'M
IMPRESSED.

REALLY?

I'M
DISAPPOINTED...

SOMETIMES
SAYING IT OUT
LOUD HELPS ME
FOCUS.





...AND NOT
JUST BECAUSE MY
IDIOT BOYFRIEND IS
BEHAVING EVERY BIT AS
IRRESPONSIBLY AS THE
AVENGERS PREDICTED HE
WOULD, BUT BECAUSE
YOU'RE **ENCOURAGING**
HIM, QUICKSILVER.

HOW DO YOU
NOT GET THAT IF DOOM
IS POWERFUL ENOUGH TO
HAVE CAPTURED THE SCARLET
WITCH, HE'S NOT LIKELY TO
BE THREATENED BY A TENTH-
GRADE WIZARD AND A GUY
WHO CAN RUN REALLY
FAST?

TEDDY--

MAY I
INTERJECT?

YOU MAY
NOT.



I HAVE *TRIED* TO BE SUPPORTIVE OF BILLY'S CONNECTING WITH HIS FAMILY, BECAUSE GOD KNOWS HE SUPPORTED ME THROUGH THE KREE-SKRULL JAMBOREE THAT WAS MY FAMILY REUNION.

BUT YOU KNOW WHAT'S EVEN *CRAZIER* THAN A KREE-SKRULL JAMBOREE?

TAKING TIME OUT FOR THIS PARTICULAR TIRADE?

THE *MAXIMOFF* FAMILY!

YOU PEOPLE ARE EVERY BIT AS TOXIC AS I THOUGHT YOU'D BE, BUT YOU'RE NOWHERE NEAR AS *SMART*.



YOU WANT TO SNEAK OFF TO LATVERIA *WITHOUT* US? PLEASE DO.

THE LESS MY FRIENDS AND I HAVE TO DO WITH *YOU--OR* YOUR FATHER--OR DOCTOR DOOM--THE BETTER.

BUT IF YOU SOMEHOW MANAGE TO CONVINCE MY IDIOT BOYFRIEND TO GO *WITH* YOU...

...I WILL RIP YOUR LEGS OFF.



DO WE UNDERSTAND EACH OTHER, PIETRO?

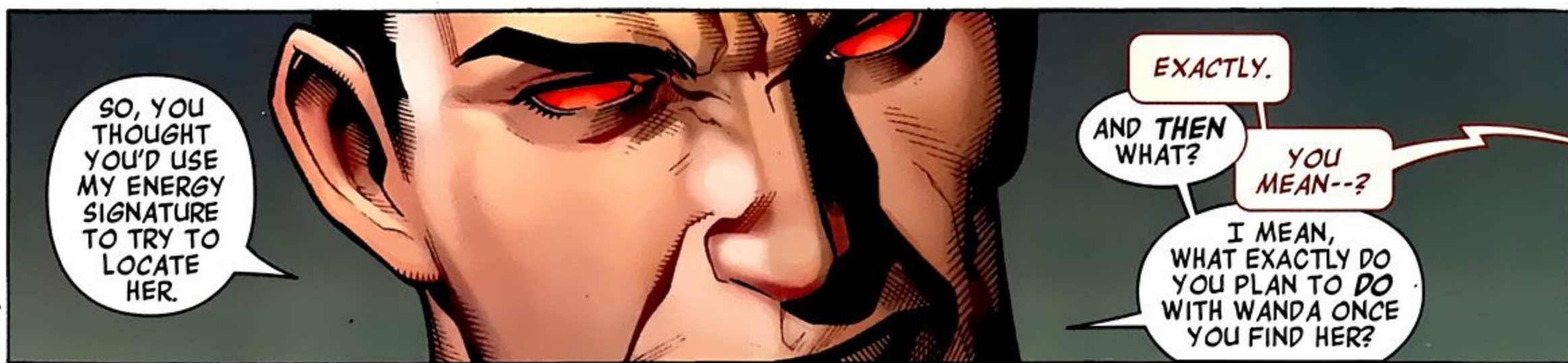


I THOUGHT SO.

C'MON, BILLY.

"SO, WHAT'S YOUR NEXT MOVE?"

"WE'RE GOING TO FIND THE *SCARLET WITCH*..."





OR HAVEN'T THE MIGHTY AVENGERS FIGURED THAT OUT YET?

WE'RE GONNA KILL HER.



LOGAN--

YOU WANT TO MAKE *ME* THE BAD GUY FOR SAYING IT OUT LOUD, CAP, THAT'S FINE. BUT THE *LAST* TIME WE HAD THIS DEBATE, WE ENDED UP AS *SLAVES* IN MAGNETOLAND.

THE SCARLET WITCH MURDERED OUR FRIENDS--SHE STOLE OUR LIVES--AND THEN SHE TOOK OUT ABOUT A *MILLION* MUTANTS.

AND NOT *ONE* OF YOU CAN TELL ME SHE WON'T DO SOMETHING LIKE THAT--OR WORSE--AGAIN.

SO THE ONLY PERMANENT SOLUTION IS TO *KILL* HER.

AND IF WE WERE SMART, WE'D GET RID OF *WICCAN*, TOO.

YOU MADE THIS MAN AN *AVENGER*, CAP?

WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU, WILLIAMS? DID THE WITCH CAST A SPELL ON *YOU*, TOO? OR ARE YOU STILL HOPING SHE'LL PICK *YOU* OVER THE ROBOT?

'CAUSE, FROM WHERE I'M STANDING, THE ROBOT'S LOOKING LIKE MORE OF A MAN THAN YOU'LL *EVER* BE.



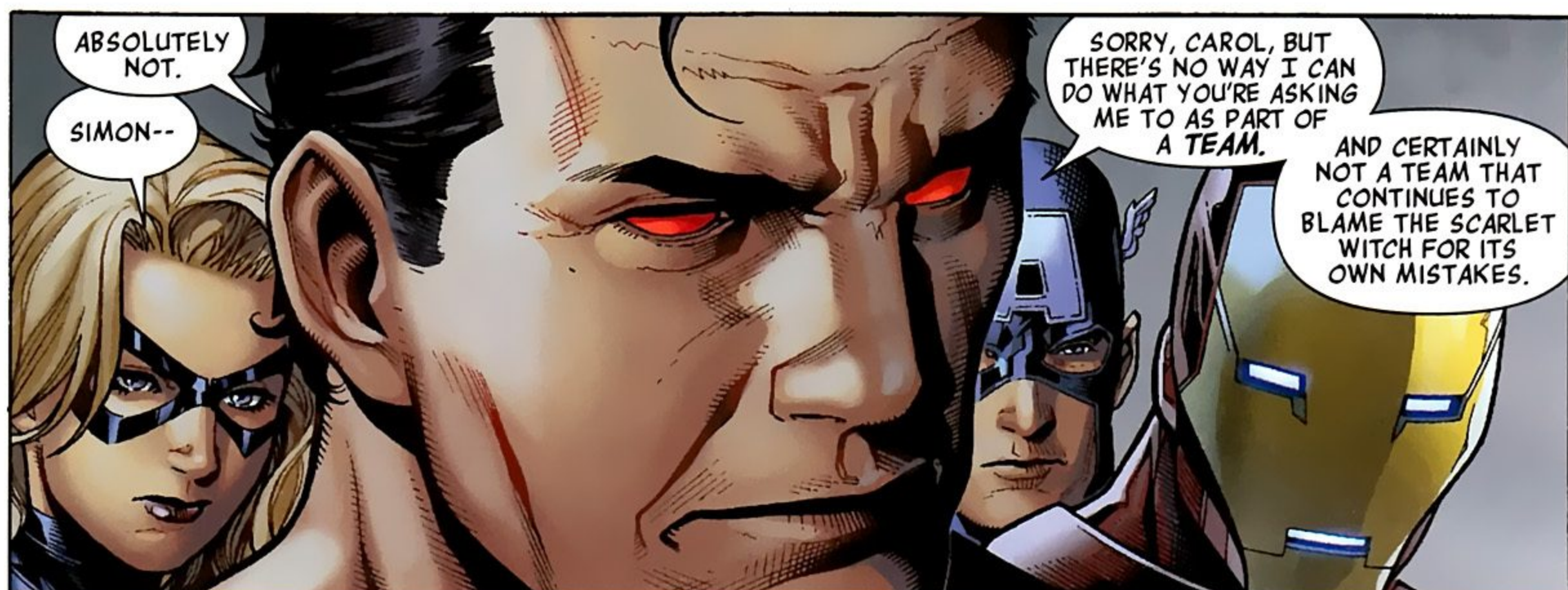
THEN YOU MIGHT WANT TO STAND *BACK*...



BAMMM

...AND LOOK *AGAIN!*







Dear Teddy,

you are without a doubt the best boyfriend in the entire world.

you're kind.

you're generous.

you threaten to maim people for me.



you're forgiving.

At least I hope you'll be.



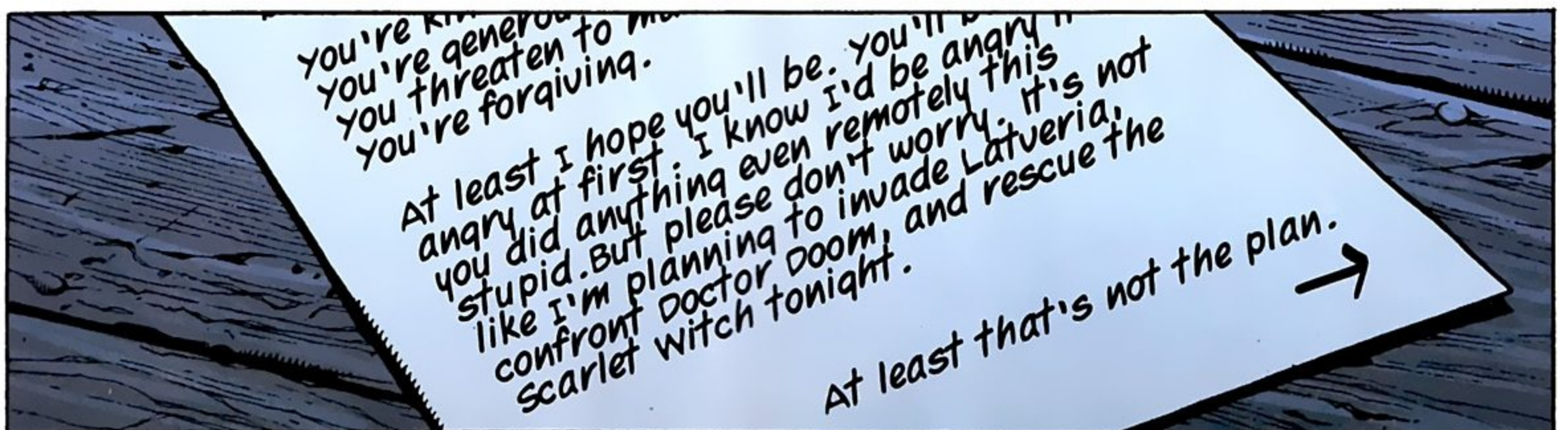
you'll be angry at first.

I know I'd be angry if you did anything even remotely this stupid.



But please don't worry.

It's not like I'm planning to invade Latveria, confront Doctor Doom, and rescue the Scarlet Witch tonight.



you're kind.
you're generous.
you threaten to maim people for me.
you're forgiving.

At least I hope you'll be. you'll be angry at first. I know I'd be angry if you did anything even remotely this stupid. But please don't worry. It's not like I'm planning to invade Latveria, confront Doctor Doom, and rescue the Scarlet Witch tonight.

At least that's not the plan. →



I promise there will be no castle-storming whatsoever.

Just a little on-site recon.



Besides, Doom's palace will be so heavily guarded, I probably won't be able to get anywhere near it.



However, it occurs to me that if you're reading this, something may have gone terribly wrong...



...because the plan was to come back and destroy this note without your ever knowing I had gone.



Which means, of course, that your idiot boyfriend has probably been captured by Doctor Doom.

I'd tell you not to risk your own safety by coming to rescue me, but I know you will anyway, because--as previously stated--you are the best boyfriend in the entire world.

*All my love (and apologies),
Billy xx*



AND, OF COURSE,
NOW I'M
SURROUNDED
BY DOOMBOTS.

BUT I'M NOT
PANICKING...

...BECAUSE I CAN
JUST *MAGIC*
MYSELF BACK TO
TRANSIA.



OR...

...SINCE I'M
ALREADY HERE...

...I MIGHT AS
WELL SEE HOW
FAR I CAN
TAKE THIS.

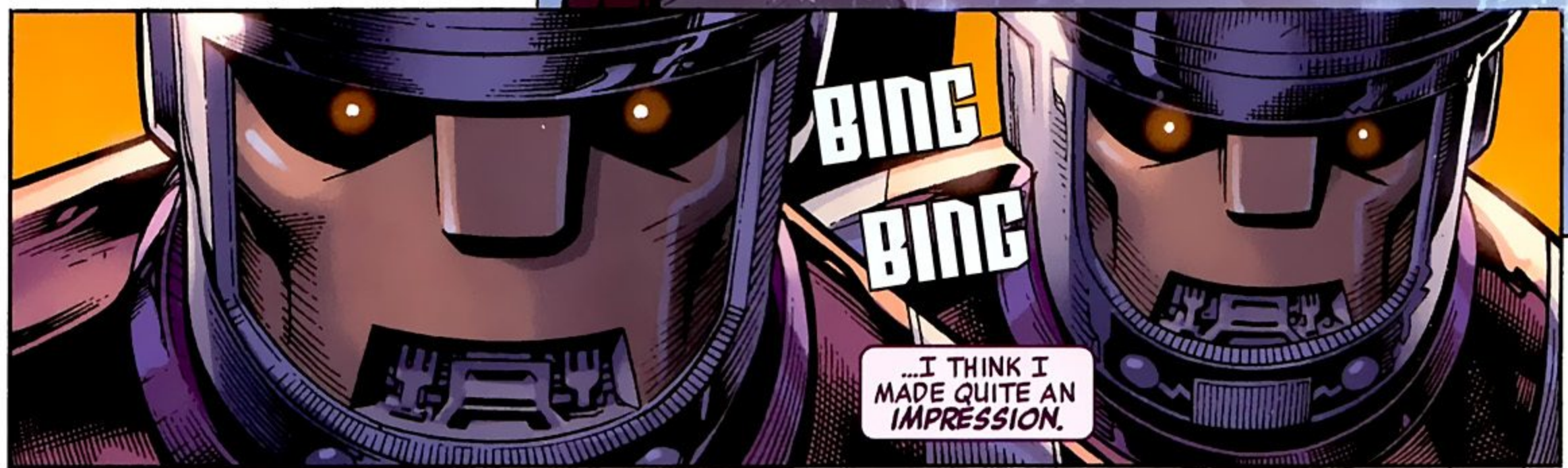
SORRY TO
HAVE DISTURBED
YOU, BUT I SEEM
TO HAVE GOTTEN
LOST.



WOULD YOU
MIND SHOWING
ME BACK TO
MY ROOM?

FOR THE RECORD, I
AM *NOT* THE SORT OF
PERSON WHO ENJOYS
DRESSING UP IN HIS
MOTHER'S CLOTHES...

...BUT I
HAVE TO
SAY...



BING
BING

...I THINK I
MADE QUITE AN
IMPRESSION.



...BY MY
MOTHER.

WHO ARE
YOU? AND WHAT
ARE YOU DOING IN
MY ROOM?

I'M...

I'M YOUR
SON.

I'M...

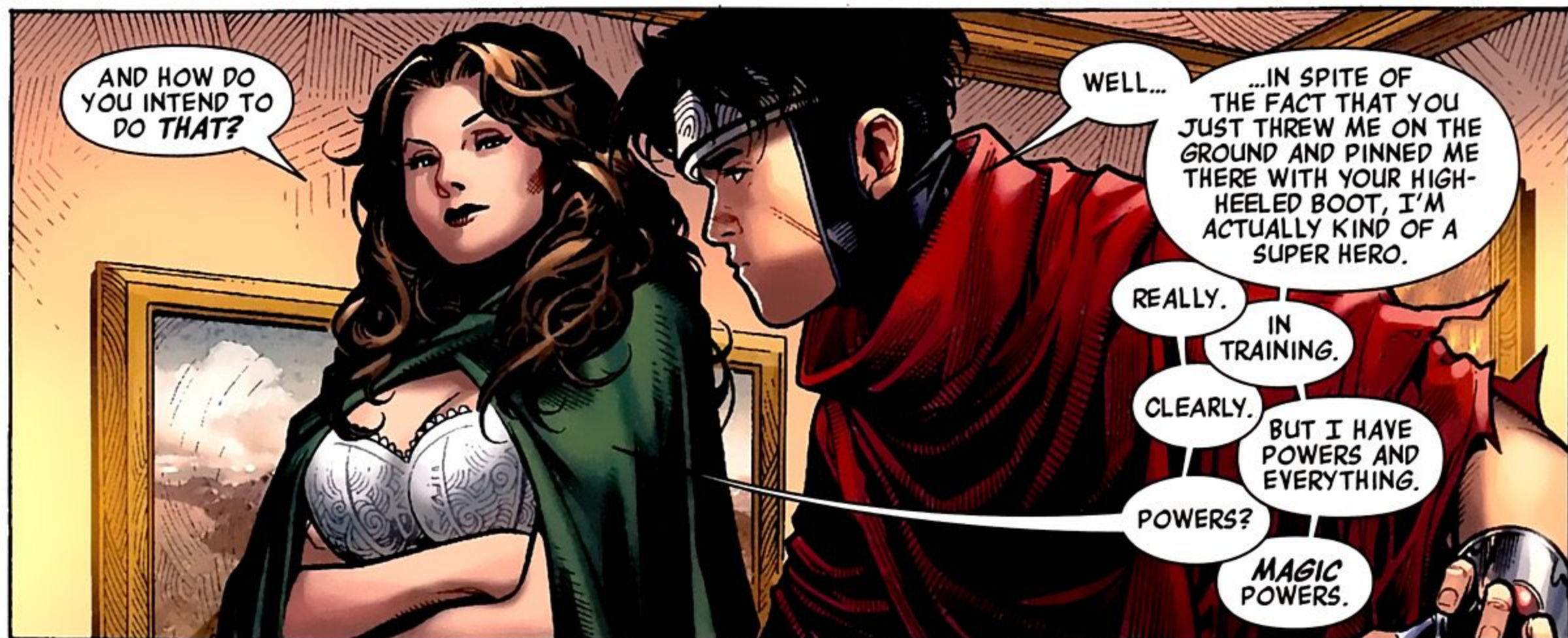
I'M THE SON
YOU THOUGHT WAS
DEAD, BUT WHOSE
SOUL MIGRATED INTO
THE BODY OF A GAY,
JEWISH AVENGERS
FANBOY WHO GREW
UP ON THE UPPER
WEST SIDE.

I'M...

I'M AN
IDIOT.

I'M HERE
TO RESCUE
YOU...

...FROM
DOCTOR
DOOM.



AND HOW DO YOU INTEND TO DO THAT?

WELL...

...IN SPITE OF THE FACT THAT YOU JUST THREW ME ON THE GROUND AND PINNED ME THERE WITH YOUR HIGH-HEELED BOOT, I'M ACTUALLY KIND OF A SUPER HERO.

REALLY.

IN TRAINING.

CLEARLY.

BUT I HAVE POWERS AND EVERYTHING.

POWERS?

MAGIC POWERS.



I'M WICCAN.

OF THE YOUNG AVENGERS?

THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE.

WE MET ONCE BEFORE--OUTSIDE THE MANSION? YOU PROBABLY DON'T REMEMBER ME, BUT I'M A HUGE FAN, AND I'M HERE ON BEHALF OF YOUR FATHER AND--



MY FATHER IS DEAD.

NO. HE'S FINE. HE'S WORRIED ABOUT YOU. QUICKSILVER IS, TOO, BUT--

WHO?

QUICKSILVER? YOUR BROTHER?

YOUNG MAN, I'M AFRAID YOU HAVE ME CONFUSED WITH SOMEONE ELSE.

MY NAME IS WANDA MAXIMOFF.



I KNOW.

AND RIGHT NOW YOU'RE EITHER **PRETENDING** TO HAVE AMNESIA SO YOU CAN MAKE A NEW START-- WHICH I MORE THAN UNDERSTAND-- OR YOU ACTUALLY **DO** HAVE AMNESIA AND NOTHING I'M SAYING MAKES ANY SENSE TO YOU AT ALL-- WHICH I'M SORRY ABOUT.

EITHER WAY, WE HAVE TO GET YOU OUT OF HERE.



I APPRECIATE YOUR CONCERN, BUT I ASSURE YOU I'M QUITE SAFE.

IN FACT, I'M GETTING MARRIED TOMORROW.

YOU'RE WHAT?

TO WHOM?



TO ME.

DR. DOOM

TO BE CONTINUED...



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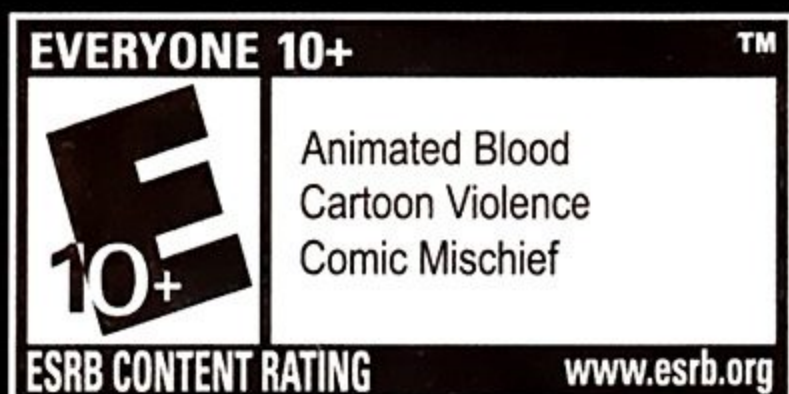
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